



Together WE COUNT

Media Toolkit



2015 CENSUS TEST IN SAVANNAH MEDIA MARKET

Media Toolkit

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Key Dates

Feb. 23 Online registration open for Notify Me service

March 23 2015 Census Test available at **census.gov/2015**

April 1 Census Day events

May 31 Deadline for residents to complete the 2015 Census Test questionnaire

Interview Requests

Please contact the U.S. Census Bureau's Public Information Office at **pio@census.gov** or 301-763-3030 to request an interview with a subject matter expert.



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Frequently Asked Questions About the 2015 Census Test

What Is the 2015 Census Test?

The U.S. Census Bureau is testing new ways to collect data in preparation for the nationwide census in 2020. These new cost-effective methods could save taxpayers up to \$5 billion in future collection efforts while maintaining the quality of the census and accuracy of the count. The 2015 Census Test taking place in the Savannah media market will let people complete the questionnaire online at any time between March 23 and May 31, 2015, using desktop computers, laptops, cellphones, or tablets, which eliminates the need to fill out paper forms and mail them back. We're also testing different ways to publicize the census and to motivate people to complete the questionnaire.

Beginning Feb. 23, people can register at census.gov/2015 to be notified by email or text message when it is time to respond to the questionnaire.

Where Is This Test Being Conducted?

The Census Bureau is conducting the 2015 Census Test in the Savannah media market (which includes Savannah and neighboring counties in South Carolina and Georgia) from March to May 2015. The Savannah media market consists of the following 20 counties:

Appling, Ga.	Chatham, Ga.	Long, Ga.	Toombs, Ga.
Bacon, Ga.	Effingham, Ga.	McIntosh, Ga.	Wayne, Ga.
Bryan, Ga.	Evans, Ga.	Montgomery, Ga.	Beaufort, S.C.
Bulloch, Ga.	Jeff Davis, Ga.	Screven, Ga.	Hampton, S.C.
Candler, Ga.	Liberty, Ga.	Tattnall, Ga.	Jasper, S.C.

Why Was This Location Chosen for the 2015 Census Test?

The Census Bureau selected the Savannah media market as a 2015 Census Test site because it meets the right conditions for the test census. These include the following:

- **It's a midsize media market.** The local population of under 1 million people is large enough to test different census methods, yet small enough to test different advertising and promotion methods without being too costly.
- **It's diverse.** The test census area includes areas with populations that are traditionally hard to count in a census. The distribution of these populations in the test census area will allow the Census Bureau to better test the effect of different methods on different groups of people.



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- **It has the right mix of Internet use.** The site has both high and low Internet use areas. This will allow the Census Bureau to better measure the impact of different ways to encourage Internet self-response.
- **It has the right mix of address types.** It includes a sufficient number of addresses that aren't "city-style." These are addresses that don't get mail delivered using a street name and number. Rural addresses are typically the hardest to match and identify in an address list.

What Is Self-Response?

When a household "self-responds," that means the household completes its census without the need for a follow-up in-person visit from a census worker. These follow-up visits drive up the cost of the census. In 2010, 74 percent of households self-responded. Increasing that percentage would save millions of dollars. Some of the methods being tested include allowing respondents to complete their census forms via the Internet or via a telephone questionnaire assistance center.

The 2015 Census Test will test different ways to contact people to inform them about the census and motivate them to complete the questionnaire. Part of this test census will include an advertising campaign, a partnership campaign with local officials and businesses, and an early awareness and engagement campaign.

The Census Bureau will test the best ways to encourage people to opt in to special email notifications, prompting Internet self-response. By deploying a variety of awareness, digital marketing, direct contact, and partnership strategies, the Census Bureau hopes this test census will reach and engage respondents to choose to register for the Notify Me campaign for the 2015 Census Test. This provides an opportunity for respondents to have early engagement in the census process and to select their preferred mode for future invitations and reminders (i.e., how to "Notify Me" via email or text message when it is time to complete the census form).

In addition, the Census Bureau will test systems that could allow people to securely complete the census on the Internet — even if they don't have or have misplaced the unique census identification number provided.

By identifying the best ways to increase self-response, the Census Bureau should be able to improve the efficiency of 2020 Census operations without compromising its commitment to a high-quality and accurate census.

Why Is the 2015 Census Test Important?

The 2015 Census Test allows the Census Bureau to try out, on a smaller scale, a number of distribution and collection methods that will be used nationally in five years. That means information from this test census will help the Census Bureau carry out the census in 2020 more effectively and accurately, saving taxpayer dollars while ensuring everyone gets counted.



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Why Is the 2020 Census Important?

An accurate census count means that communities across the nation can receive the funding, services, and business support they deserve and need. Locally, businesses often use census data to help decide where to put a store, office, or plant. Communities can use information from the count to persuade companies to move to their region. Officials rely on the data to determine bus routes, school district boundaries, and community services.

At the state and federal levels, governments use the data to decide how much money communities receive for things like building and maintaining schools. Lawmakers and policymakers can know that they have the right information for decisions that affect access to health care, education, employment and job training services, veterans' services, economic development, and more.

Census data also provide the background information the media need to report on the economic, social, cultural, and other activities of American society. Using census data, for example, a journalist can break down a population by ethnic origin and other variables such as age, sex, marital status, education, and income. The news media also use census information to determine circulation area, develop advertising and evaluate advertising campaigns, and design market surveys.



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Test Census Questions Explained: What They Are and Why They Are Asked

The U.S. Census Bureau is testing modern and cost-efficient methods — as well as new advertising and outreach strategies — to determine the most accurate ways to count everyone living in the United States. This 2015 Census Test will take place March 23 to May 31, when everyone in Savannah and 17 counties in Georgia — including the Coastal Empire — and three in South Carolina’s Lowcountry will be asked to answer the questionnaire.

The questions will be the same as those used for the official decennial census, which occurs next in 2020. The point of the 2015 Census Test, however, is to learn how to improve the ways in which the census is delivered and publicized. The results of this exercise will have national impact in 2020.

Here are the questions being asked and why the Census Bureau asks them:

1. How many people were living or staying in this house, apartment, or mobile home on April 1, 2015?

Every respondent is asked about the same date — in this case, Census Day is April 1, 2015 — so the results are consistent.

Establishing an accurate count is critical for determining how many representatives a state should have in Congress. And population counts are factored into the distribution of hundreds of billions of dollars from more than 100 federal programs.

2. Were there any additional people staying here April 1, 2015, that you did not include in Question 1?

The Census Bureau uses this question to make sure no one has been inadvertently excluded from the answer given to the first question, such as a relative, foster child, or live-in babysitter.

3. Is this house, apartment, or mobile home: owned with mortgage, owned without mortgage, rented, occupied without rent?

The answer to this question helps local, state, and federal governments make decisions about housing programs and planning. In addition, homeownership rates are an indicator of the state of the nation’s economy.

4. What is your telephone number?

The Census Bureau asks for a phone number only in case it’s necessary to contact the respondent for follow-up — for instance, if a form is missing any information.



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- 5. Please provide information for each person living here. Start with a person here who owns or rents this house, apartment, or mobile home. If the owner or renter lives somewhere else, start with any adult living here. This will be Person 1. What is Person 1's name?**

Listing the name of each person in the household helps the respondent to include all members, particularly in large households where a respondent may forget who was counted and who was not. Also, names are needed if additional information about an individual must be obtained to complete the census form. Federal law protects the confidentiality of personal information, including names.

- 6. What is Person 1's sex?**

Many federal programs must differentiate between males and females for funding, implementing, and evaluating their programs. Laws promoting equal employment opportunity for women are one example. This information also can be important for analyzing social and economic trends.

- 7. What is Person 1's age and date of birth?**

Many funding and planning decisions are based on age-related statistics and trends. For example, the federal government uses them to decide how to allocate education funds and to project the health care needs of the elderly and veterans. State and local governments use them to determine age-related needs, such as whether there will be a spike in school-age children.

- 8. Is Person 1 of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin?**

This helps federal agencies monitor compliance with antidiscrimination provisions under the Voting Rights Act, Civil Rights Act, and other laws. State and local governments may use the data to help plan and administer bilingual programs.

- 9. What is Person 1's race?**

This also is needed to monitor compliance with the Voting Rights and Civil Rights acts, as well as to help decide boundaries of voting districts. Race data are also used to assess the fairness of employment practices and monitor racial disparities in health and education.

- 10. Does Person 1 sometimes live or stay somewhere else?**

This is another question the Census Bureau asks to ensure accuracy and completeness. This information also can help the Census Bureau contact people whose forms have incomplete or missing data.

This information is also available online, at census.gov/2010census/text/text-form.php.



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Additional Resources for Media

Detailed demographic, social, housing, and economic data can strengthen and localize many news and feature stories. The U.S. Census Bureau hosts a number of online resources that provide quick and easy access to data collected through numerous censuses and surveys. Below is additional information on such resources: American FactFinder, State and County QuickFacts, Easy Stats, America's Economy, and dwellr.

American FactFinder

American FactFinder provides access to data about the United States, Puerto Rico, and the Island Areas. The data in American FactFinder come from several censuses and surveys. Find popular facts (population, income, etc.) and frequently requested data about communities across the country.

To use American FactFinder, visit factfinder.census.gov.

State and County QuickFacts

QuickFacts is an easy-to-use application that shows tables, maps, and charts of frequently requested data from 10 Census Bureau censuses, surveys, and programs. Profiles are available for the nation; all 50 states, as well as the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico; and specific counties. County subdivisions with populations of 5,000 or greater are also included.

To use State and County QuickFacts, visit quickfacts.census.gov.

Easy Stats

Easy Stats gives you quick and easy access to selected statistics collected by the U.S. Census Bureau through the American Community Survey, which every year makes available detailed demographic and economic statistics for the nation's communities and their people.

This interactive tool provides the latest statistics about where you live. You can search different geographies including states, counties, incorporated places (towns and cities), census designated places, and even congressional districts. With Easy Stats, you can view detailed breakdowns of information by race, age, and sex — and much more.

To use Easy Stats, visit census.gov/easystats.



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America's Economy

The America's Economy mobile app provides real-time updates for 20 key economic indicators released from the U.S. Census Bureau, Bureau of Labor Statistics, and Bureau of Economic Analysis.

dwellr

The dwellr app allows people to discover new places in the United States right from their phone.

To download apps, visit census.gov/mobile.

To see the latest news releases and statements from the U.S. Census Bureau, visit census.gov/newsroom.html.



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